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E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/10/2018
TAGS: [KNNP](#) [MNUC](#) [PARM](#) [PK](#) [PREL](#)
SUBJECT: POSSIBLE RELEASE OF A.Q. KHAN

Classified By: SCA Richard A. Boucher, Reasons: 1.4 B C AND D

SUMMARY AND Action request

¶1. (C) Washington is concerned that the government of Pakistan may release A.Q. Khan. Washington requests Post to please draw from points in para 4, as appropriate, with senior government officials including the Director General of Strategic Plans Division Lt. Gen (retd) Kidwai.

End summary and action request.

OBJECTIVES

¶2. (S/NF) Post should achieve the following objectives:

- Inquire about the accuracy of press reports indicating that Dr. Khan will soon be released from house arrest.
- Express Washington,s strong opposition to the release of Dr. Khan and urge the Government of Pakistan to continue holding him under house arrest.,
- Explain the possible negative consequences that the release of Dr. Khan will have on Pakistan,s image in the international community. Note that it would undermine the positive steps Pakistan has taken on nonproliferation.
- Urge Pakistan to consider the long-term gains it could garner from the international community by continuing Dr. Khan,s current status rather than the short-term domestic political gains that could result from his release.

End objectives.

BACKGROUND

¶3. (S/NF) Recent press reports indicate a plan for Dr. Khan,s release was approved for delivery to Prime Minister Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani. We should determine the accuracy of the reports and clearly indicate to the new government, as well as Director General Kidwai, our strong opposition to Khan,s release. Dr. Khan was the central figure in the most egregious violation of nonproliferation norms to date and his release would likely indicate to the international community a disregard by Pakistan for the dire threat still posed to international security by Dr. Khan,s activities. It could also undermine ongoing prosecution efforts underway in other countries to punish Khan associates and would be a setback to our ongoing bilateral nonproliferation efforts with Pakistan.

End background.

Talking Points

14. (S/Rel Pakistan) Begin Talking Points for Pakistan:

-- Pakistan has taken positive steps over the past few years to demonstrate its commitment to nonproliferation, including enacting its 2004 export control law, establishing the Strategic Export Control Division (SECDIV), and joining the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism.

-- We are deeply troubled by press reports that Pakistan may consider releasing Dr. Khan. We hope that these press reports are not accurate.

-- We urge you not to change Dr. Khan,s current status. While the release of Dr. Khan would be viewed positively by some in Pakistan, it would undermine Pakistan,s broader nonproliferation efforts and signal to the international community that Pakistan is no longer concerned about the harm caused by Dr. Khan and his network.

-- When Dr. Khan was pardoned by President Musharraf, Pakistan was widely criticized in the international community for not having prosecuted him or anyone else associated with his proliferation activities.

-- The damage done to international security by Dr. Khan and his associates is not a closed book. Other countries continue efforts to prosecute those involved. The U.S., and other countries, as well as the IAEA, are expending enormous amounts of time and resources to address the threats that resulted from Dr. Khan,s engagement with Iran, North Korea, and possibly other states.

-- Because of Khan,s actions, the international community must contend with the reality that the uranium enrichment technology and nuclear weapons designs that were sold to Libya are now available to other states and non-state actors. This will make it much harder to combat nuclear proliferation in the future.

-- The U.S. and Pakistan have worked together to address the problems caused by Dr. Khan,s proliferation to other countries and we look forward to our continued close cooperation on this and other related issues.

End talking points for Pakistan.

REPORTING DEADLINE

15. (U) Please report response if possible by April 17, 2008.

POINT OF CONTACT

16. (U) Department point of contact is Chris Herrington ISN/CPI, 647-5035. Please slug all responses for ISN, T, and SCA. Washington appreciates Post,s assistance.
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